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PEACE BAPTIST—Rev. E. N. Pippin, Pastor. Preaching every Saturday and Sunday.

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PEACE BAPTIST CHURCH—Every Sunday evening at 12 o'clock—Rev. W. H. Clegg, Pastor.

PEACE BAPTIST—Every Sunday afternoon.

CHRISTIAN—Every Thursday afternoon.

PEACE BAPTIST—Every Sunday morning at 10 o'clock—Rev. J. H. Thompson, Superintendent.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH—Rev. J. G. Russell, Pastor. Preaching Second and Fourth Sunday in each month at 10 o'clock.

STONETOWN.

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## EDUCATIONAL.

### Busy Work.

The following paper was read by Miss Mary Powers, before the Wise County Teachers' Association at this place November 26th, 1903.

The subject assigned me is one of more or less interest to every teacher. I have not attempted to discuss it in an elaborate manner, but have endeavored to confine myself, in the main, to the two questions: "What is Busy Work?" and "What is Not?" with the hope that it will be of some benefit to the teachers of the Primary and Grammar grades.

In the disciplining of a school-room the primary teacher will find that one of the first essentials conducive to good order is to see that the children under her supervision are kept supplied with necessary articles to occupy their time. Pupils of the lower grades demand a continual change of work, and if they are deprived of this variation along some line then it is true that the old proverb "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," is as true now as it ever was. We realize then, the necessity of providing profitable work for idle pupils, and the question confronts us, how are we to meet this inextricable demand? Just here it is that the much thought of busy work comes to the rescue.

Now, "What is Busy Work?" All busy work should have the manual element in it. Some task must be set for the child so that, after the 15 or 20 minutes have expired, he has something to show, something which proves that he has been busy. Still this work should not be purely manual, but should also have the mental and educational element. If it is not the latter then the children will be tempted to whisper. We all know from experience that when we are writing a letter or solving a difficult problem, we do not wish to be spoken to. But when we are sewing or knitting we find it both pleasant and convenient to carry on a conversation at the same time. All busy work must be such as has received previous attention, so that the children can go ahead and do something without many directions or without much help from the teacher. Under no consideration allow the children to do work without the strictest direction to distract the attention by asking questions about their work, for, after all, the recitation is of prime importance. They are set to work and they must rely on themselves and their own judgment. Herein lies one of the chief benefits of busy work.

But there must be some. There is none where the patter of the little feet are no longer heard. They have passed, like spirit shadows, across the threshold of our hearts and homes, and their minis have been transformed into the soft essence of angelic pinions that only heavenly ears can know. These little stockings only God can fill with His love, His tenderness, His wisdom and goodness.

How like heaven this earth would be if nowhere upon its surface, on the coming Christmas morn, not a home could be found that would be childless, and not a single little stocking should be found empty!—*Knoxville Sentinel*.

On the other hand, "What is not Busy Work?" In our eagerness to make all pleasing to the child, and in our lack of something to fit in, we resort to man's ingenuity to invent schemes to interest him, forgetting that we must divert his energies along the lines of highest life. It is easier to direct attention to some pleasing amusement, quite different from that which is directed to a dull task book. Even among trained teachers there seems to be an indecision in the use of teach-by-handy work material. Taking into consideration that all this work is supposed to have a certain educational value, it is obviously the duty of the teacher to use the material in such a way that the pupils may derive positive benefit from it.

There are some enthusiastic teachers who carry the idea of diverting busy work to an extreme. They have drawn up a plan of study, and language all to answer the purpose of busy work. There is danger in this, since we may lose the natural, healthy results may be obtained, but if we overdo busy work in all these ways and load upon it in all three cases, then we have done exactly what we ought not to have done. Edward F. Biggs has put it: "You have shaken water and oil together and made a compound good neither for lubricating nor for quenching thirst."

This work is probably one of the most thoughtlessly planned and carelessly executed of all primary school tasks. It is thoughtlessly planned, because many times it has no definite aim or any definite connection with any other work. Disconnected busy work is of little value except as a diversion to be used once in a while.

The most helpful and most interesting busy work follows and goes hand in hand with the regular teaching. For example, the teacher has taught word-drill as a new word. The succeeding busy work should only be such as shall help to fix the new word. Outling the letters with pens or tracing the familiar word through paper, will stamp the word on the mind. To find out of a handful of miscellaneous words, all the letter cards that "dull" will be a delight.

Teach the children to their seats to draw straight lines, or to make shapes with pens, is only useless or tiresome work, but is decidedly wrong, as it causes the mind to make suddenly a radical change.

One of the charges against busy work is that it is too often carelessly done by the children, and carelessly corrected by the teacher. It is the teacher's duty to look in every child's work and give individual attention to each child.

During the year, or at any time when new work is to be used, it will pay the teacher to take the class as a whole and understand the work. By doing this the children realize that the teacher considers the busy work important, well worthy of her help and her approval.

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## EDUCATIONAL.

## EMPTY STOCKINGS.

Throughout christendom there are millions of little eyes beaming happy anticipation at the name of Santa Claus, and millions of little hearts beating time to the happy moments leading on to Christmas. There are some sentimental persons who would deprive childhood of the happiness associated with this annual occasion. Fortunately for the children there are but few with such practical propensities and so long as Christ's spirit shall live, and the story of His birth, His mission and His crucifixion be told, this child-like ignorance concerning the actual personal existence of Santa Claus will assist all things that are bright and beautiful with "Ole Santa."

When the children become wise they no longer believe in Santa Claus as having a personal entity, and that mother's kiss can no longer make well the bruised desk or the throbbing brain, the confines of happy childhood have been passed and henceforth there is to be nothing to confront them but a cold, hard, pitiless and deceitful world. Let us then prolong this period and let time and tide in their natural sequence, and not our hand, lift the curtain that shuns out happy childhood from the sad realities of life.

And yet, if we look closely, we shall find cracks in the curtain and, in the midst of universal jollity, merriment and happy anticipations, may be found aching little hearts, tearful childish eyes, tired little feet and, on the Christmas morning, when God's own shall open up the great panoramas of nature to man's vision, there will be besides where no little stockings are hanging.

In this land of plenty and of promise it seems that there should be no empty stockings on Christmas morn. In a land where wealth beyond the dreams of avarice abounds; where church spires, like fingers pointing to God, are found in every city, town and hamlet; where there is work for all, and where Christ's spirit is supposed to dwell in the national, the domestic and the personal life, there should be no sad aching hearts, there should be no empty little stockings and no fireless hearthstones on Christmas morn.

But there must be some. There is homes where the patter of the little feet are no longer heard. They have passed, like spirit shadows, across the threshold of our hearts and homes, and their minis have been transformed into the soft essence of angelic pinions that only heavenly ears can know. These little stockings only God can fill with His love, His tenderness, His wisdom and goodness.

Another hopeful sign, if more are needed to convince the world that the great Southwest is growing greater every day, is seen in the recent establishment of a new national bank at Gate City. When business men are sure enough of conditions and hopeful enough of the future of a community to undertake to increase its banking facilities, it is usually set down as certain that that neighborhood is flourishing and its people optimistic. The character of a place is determined no more quickly than through its banking institutions. Gate City is a coming center of rich territory and means to make still longer strides towards the front if the spirit its people are now evidencing may be taken as an indication—*Bristol Herald*.

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